



The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 7 October 1968



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THE PRESIDENT'S
DAILY BRIEF
7 OCTOBER 1968

1. Czechoslovakia -
Soviet Union

Dubcek is ready to resign, according to press reports. We have no confirmation, but it seems clear that the Soviets have finally managed to undermine both the unity of the liberal leadership and the extent of its popular support. With these two crucial props gone, the leadership can hardly resist Moscow's pressure for wholesale "normalization," and it would not be surprising if Dubcek chose to bow out rather than preside over this process.

2. Warsaw Pact

We have little to confirm current rumors that a Warsaw Pact exercise will soon take place, but we would not be surprised if one did occur. Autumn has been a time for military exercises in Pact countries even in periods of relatively little tension.

3. Peru

The new military government, while making it clear to all and sundry who is boss, has generally been acting with restraint. Peru has been calm since the coup.

All the members of the cabinet are military men. Most of them are professionally competent, although few have any experience in government. They are still feeling their way on most issues, but the government's abrogation of the agreement with the US-owned International Petroleum Company indicates it will be more nationalistic than its predecessor.

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4. North Korea

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5. Communist China

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6. Soviet Union

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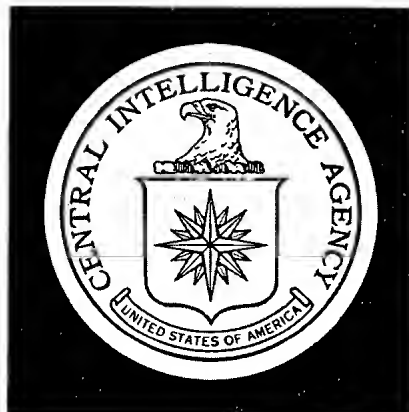
7. The Netherlands

The Dutch, who have long tried to get US propulsion technology for a nuclear-powered submarine they plan to build, are beginning to press harder. The chairman of the parliamentary defense committee told our ambassador that the Netherlands might have to look for technical assistance to France, which he said was willing to consider such a deal for an unspecified price.

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FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

- 1.) Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
- 2.) North Vietnamese Reflections of U S
Political Attitudes



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Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
for the President's Eyes Only

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I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

North Vietnamese Regrouping: A partial repositioning of North Vietnamese combat units from the northern portion of South Vietnam to base areas in Laos and north of the Demilitarized Zone has been under way since early August. Similar, although somewhat less extensive, moves in this area have been noted in the past when the weather has made it difficult for the enemy to keep his troops supplied or when enemy units have taken extremely heavy casualties. This year, successful allied spoiling operations and destruction of important caches of enemy food and munitions, coupled with the effects of Typhoon Bess, have made it unusually difficult for the North Vietnamese to keep their full complement of units in operation in this region.

All indications are that the current repositioning of North Vietnamese forces fits in with past enemy military practice and can be explained on the basis of the enemy's military needs. The evidence indicates that the North Vietnamese continue to pump supplies into the area north of the zone and, as in the past, they are keeping some units active in a harassing role despite the current pullback of major units.

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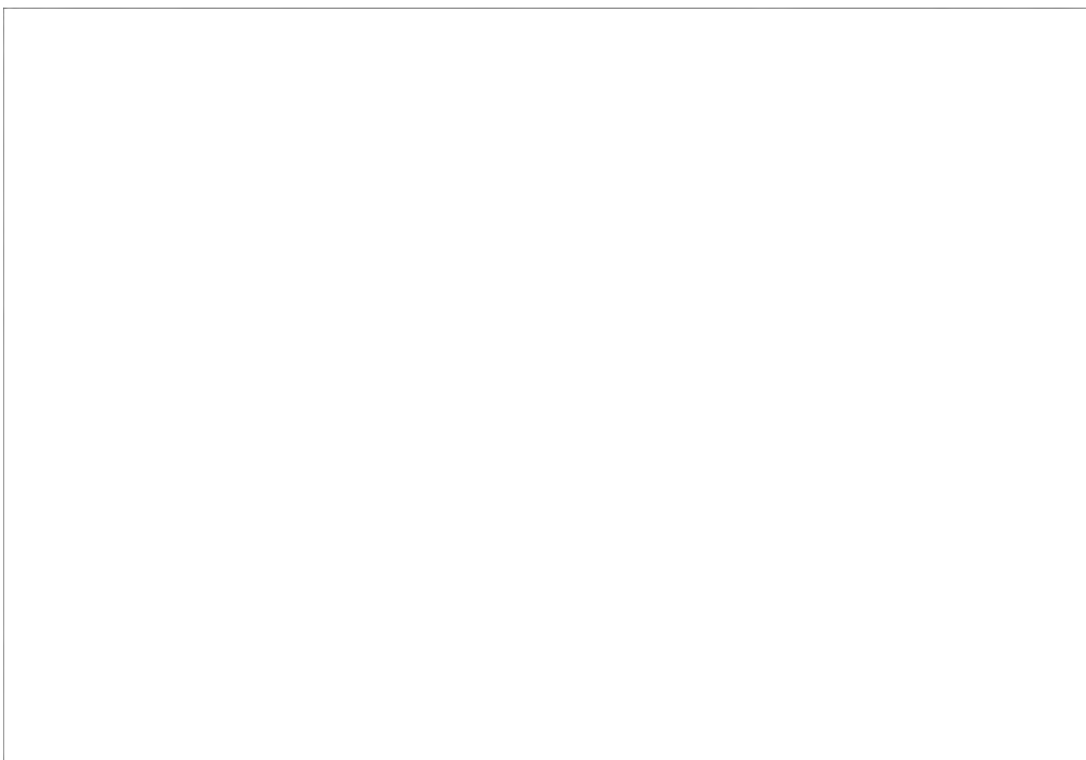
Logistics: With continuing poor weather in the North Vietnamese panhandle hampering both enemy truck movements and allied air operations, pilots reported sighting 32 percent fewer trucks during 23-29 September--362 compared with 532 during the previous week. The sightings were about 58 percent below the weekly average of 858 since April.

There were no reports of convoy movements or of large concentrations of vehicles. The typical sighting consisted of one to five trucks. Sightings during September were about 42 percent below August's

total and about 60 percent below the July figure. The decline in truck sightings during September can probably be attributed to poor weather, widespread flood damage, and air interdiction along critical route segments.

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Alleged Attacks on Dikes: Hanoi's Ministry of Water Conservancy has again charged the US with intensifying attacks on dikes and water conservation projects in North Vietnam. The statement, broadcast by Hanoi Radio's international service in English on 5 October, alleges that US planes made more than 30 attacks on such targets in southern North Vietnam during September. The US was attempting to destroy essential public utility works, the statement claims. The attacks were characterized as "utterly odious crimes running counter to international law and human morality."

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More Cash for the Fatherland: Hanoi is trying to squeeze more donations from Vietnamese living in Thailand. A captured pro-Communist Vietnamese stated he had attended a meeting where a letter was read asking the Vietnamese in Thailand to earn and save more money so that it could be contributed to North Vietnam. The letter said victory was near and every effort should be made for the final push.

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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

There is nothing of significance to report today.

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